

My perspective as listener from Asia

I feel very privileged to participate in the International Mission Conference today in order to listen to thoughts and reflections from different perspectives on the topic of mission. I come from Batak Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia, am currently serving in Germany as an Ecumenical Pastor. I see, experience, and feel that differences in economic, political, geographic, cultural situations, which are challenges, are also opportunities in God's Mission.

These differences cannot be overcome by one church alone, but we are together. Angelika said, we need togetherness and Mission has always meant crossing borders.

Something caught my attention from the conversation at the workshop yesterday on the topic "What does equal communion in mission mean." Rev. Bernd Müller said we are all equally children of God. Those who have, give to those who do not have. Those who have advantages give to those who lack.

Dr. Gregor Giemza said the Germans understand Mission as ecological responsibility and talk less about the Bible. We in Poland talk more about the Bible but pay less attention to ecology. We in Indonesia emphasize the fellowship of prayer, praise and teaching of God's Word. However, there are still many injustices and ecological damages that cause suffering for marginalized communities.

God's Mission is our Mission. The Mission that Jesus commanded in Matthew 28, of course, cannot be seen in a narrow sense of baptizing, making disciples and teaching alone. The task of evangelism is not just the work of one church or one denomination. But that task is our collective duty.

When we talk about today's mission, I want to emphasize the proclamation of the mission of Jesus. In Luke 4 we read that our mission is to proclaim the Good News to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, to free the oppressed, to proclaim that the year of God's grace has come.

There is one thing I like about my culture in Indonesia, especially the Batak people. If people meet or visit each other at home. We often ask: have you eaten? The conversation will not continue if one is hungry. This culture has a positive influence on evangelism in the Batak land. When we gather to talk about God's Word, praying and singing often ends with a joint meal. We take turns meeting in our homes for house devotions and take turns serving meals. In household services, the sermon is not a monologue, but there is dialogue and testimony. In this community, there is growing solidarity and connection in conversation. Suppose someone is sick. The community visits and prays for him. This friendship keeps the community strong and growing. In my church, this works. If you want your church to be complete, invite them to eat a lot and ask them to sing, and then you talk to them about God's Word, morals and kindness. And not as a theory, but as real life.

I have experienced and practiced this in Germany with people from different cultural backgrounds, especially in encounters with refugees from Iran. I am amazed how this community of three people has grown to a large group and solid community, like a family

I think what the early church practiced in Acts 2:44-47 is also still very relevant today. United, belonging to each other, preserving and with one heart They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

I see how important Koinonia, Marturia, Diakonia, and Teaching are unified in today's mission. We do some with all our heart and pay little attention to other parts. My struggle in Germany is that more and more people are not interested in church and decide to leave the church. Some people don't think of Koinonia as an essential part. The lack of participation of children, young people, and young families in the church needs serious attention from us in Germany. And in my church, the community is solid because the teaching and Koinonia in our place are powerful. However, our church in Indonesia needs to learn from

Germany and the churches in Europe of outward solidarity and concern for ecology. But we also in Germany need to build a solid, strong community around us here, where many people experience great love from God.